

UNCLASSIFIED

AD NUMBER	
AD502564	
CLASSIFICATION CHANGES	
TO:	unclassified
FROM:	confidential
LIMITATION CHANGES	
TO:	Approved for public release, distribution unlimited
FROM:	Distribution authorized to U.S. Gov't. agencies and their contractors; Administrative/Operational Use; 07 JUN 1969. Other requests shall be referred to Office of the Adjutant General, Washington, DC 20310.
AUTHORITY	
30 Jun 1981, DoDD 5200.10; OAG D/A ltr, 11 Jun 1981	

THIS PAGE IS UNCLASSIFIED

THIS REPORT HAS BEEN DELIMITED
AND CLEARED FOR PUBLIC RELEASE
UNDER DOD DIRECTIVE 5200.20 AND
NO RESTRICTIONS ARE IMPOSED UPON
ITS USE AND DISCLOSURE.

DISTRIBUTION STATEMENT A

APPROVED FOR PUBLIC RELEASE,
DISTRIBUTION UNLIMITED.

SECURITY

MARKING

The classified or limited status of this report applies to each page, unless otherwise marked.

Separate page printouts **MUST be marked accordingly.**

THIS DOCUMENT CONTAINS INFORMATION AFFECTING THE NATIONAL DEFENSE OF THE UNITED STATES WITHIN THE MEANING OF THE ESPIONAGE LAWS, TITLE 18, U.S.C., SECTIONS 793 AND 794. THE TRANSMISSION OR THE REVELATION OF ITS CONTENTS IN ANY MANNER TO AN UNAUTHORIZED PERSON IS PROHIBITED BY LAW.

NOTICE: When government or other drawings, specifications or other data are used for any purpose other than in connection with a definitely related government procurement operation, the U.S. Government thereby incurs no responsibility, nor any obligation whatsoever; and the fact that the Government may have formulated, furnished, or in any way supplied the said drawings, specifications, or other data is not to be regarded by implication or otherwise as in any manner licensing the holder or any other person or corporation, or conveying any rights or permission to manufacture, use or sell any patented invention that may in any way be related thereto.



CONFIDENTIAL

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
OFFICE OF THE ADJUTANT GENERAL
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20310

IN REPLY REFER TO

AGAM-P (M)(13 June 1969) FOR OT UT 69B018

23 June 1969

SUBJECT: Senior Officer Debriefing Report: MG Melvin Zais, CG, 101st Airborne Division (Airmobile), Period 19 July 1968 to 25 May 1969 (U)

AD 502564

SEE DISTRIBUTION

231
731
in 217
by 217

Original

1. Reference: AR 1-26, subject, Senior Officer Debriefing Program (U), dated 4 November 1966.
2. Transmitted herewith is the report of MG Melvin Zais, subject as above.
3. This report is provided to insure appropriate benefits are realized from the experiences of the author. The report should be reviewed in accordance with paragraphs 3 and 5, AR 1-26; however, it should not be interpreted as the official view of the Department of the Army, or of any agency of the Department of the Army.

BY ORDER OF THE SECRETARY OF THE ARMY:

C. A. Stanfield
C. A. STANFIELD
Colonel, AGC

Acting The Adjutant General

1 Incl
as

DISTRIBUTION:

- Commanding Generals
 - US Continental Army Command
 - US Army Combat Developments Command
- Commandants
 - US Army War College
 - US Army Command and General Staff College
 - US Army Adjutant General School
 - US Army Armor School
 - US Army Aviation School
 - US Army Chaplain School
 - US Army Civil Affairs School
 - US Army Combat Surveillance School
 - US Army Field Artillery School

Regraded unclassified when separated
from classified inclosure.

JUL 6 1969

CONFIDENTIAL

DO NOT DISTRIBUTE	EXEMPT FROM GDS
----------------------	-----------------------

CONFIDENTIAL

DISTRIBUTION (Cont'd)

- US Army Infantry School
- US Army Intelligence School
- US Army Medical Field Service School
- US Army Missile and Munitions School
- US Army Ordnance School
- US Army Quartermaster School
- US Army Security Agency School
- US Army Signal School
- US Army Southeastern Signal School
- US Army Special Warfare School

Copies furnished:

- Office, Chief of Staff, US Army
- Deputy Chiefs of Staff
- Chief of Research and Development
- Assistant Chiefs of Staff
- Chief of Engineers
- Chief of Military History
- OSD(SA) Assistant for Southeast Asia Forces
- Office, Joint Chiefs of Staff
- CINC, US Army, Pacific
- CINC, US Strike Command
- Commanding Generals
 - US Army Materiel Command
 - US Army STRATCOM
 - US Army Weapons Command
 - US Army Flight Training Center
- Commander, US Army Forces Southern Command
- Chief of Staff, USAF
- Deputy Chief of Staff, Air Force, Plans and Operations
- Commandants
 - Armed Forces Staff College
 - Defense Intelligence School
 - Industrial College of the Armed Forces
 - The National War College
- Senior Army Representative, Marine Corps Development & Education Command
- USAF Air Ground Operations School
- The Air University Library
- Director, Weapons Systems Evaluation Group
- Defense Documentation Center
- Research Analysis Corporation
- Security Officer, Hudson Institute
- Documents Control Officer, Bell Aero Systems Co.
- Commanding Officers
 - US Army Limited War Laboratory
 - US Army Logistics, Doctrine Systems & Readiness Agency
 - US Army Aviation Test Activity

CONFIDENTIAL



CONFIDENTIAL

**DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS, UNITED STATES ARMY VIETNAM
APO SAN FRANCISCO 96375**

AVHGC-DST

7 JUN 1969

SUBJECT: Senior Officer Debriefing Report

**Assistant Chief of Staff for Force Development
Department of the Army
Washington, D. C. 20310**

1. Attached are three copies of the Senior Officer Debriefing Report submitted by MG Melvin Zais. The report covers the period 19 July 1968 to 25 May 1969 during which time MG Zais was CG, 101st Airborne Division (Airmobile).
2. MG Zais is recommended as a candidate guest speaker at appropriate joint colleges and service schools.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

1 Incl
as (trip)
2 C, WD DA

C. D. Wilson
**C. D. WILSON
1LT, AGC
Assistant Adjutant General**

**Regraded unclassified when separated
from classified inclosure.**

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL



HEADQUARTERS 101ST AIRBORNE DIVISION
Office of the Commanding General
APO San Francisco 96383

AVIX-CG

25 May 1969

SUBJECT: Senior Officer's Debriefing Report (U)

Commanding General
United States Army, Vietnam
ATTN: AVIC-IST
APO San Francisco 96375

1. (U) Reference: USARV Regulation 1-3, dated 1 June 1968, Subject: Senior Officer's Debriefing Program.

2. (C) General:

a. From 19 July 1968 to 25 May 1969, the 101st Airborne Division underwent major transformations in organization, operational concepts and techniques, deployment of major elements and support concepts. The Division's area of operation, centered around the city of Hue, increased in size from an area 30 kilometers in length along the coast and ranging 40 kilometers inland toward the mountains to an area which now extends 108 kilometers in length along the coast and 70 kilometers deep to the Laotian border. Operations were conducted against the enemy's lines of communication and base areas in the mountains; initially, however, the Division focused primarily on the elimination of enemy forces in the coastal plains and the protection of population centers, allied lines of communications, key installations and the rice producing areas. With the virtual elimination of organized VC forces from the coastal plains through the combined efforts of the 101st Airborne Division, the 1st AFVN Division and Thua Thien Sector forces, the Division began to orient more and more on VC main force units and PVA in their base areas located in the mountainous jungle area adjacent to the Laotian border. This shift in operations was made possible by the significant improvement in the operational ability of the Regional and Popular forces to control the coastal plains and populated areas with only limited assistance from the Division.

b. Changes in operational concepts and techniques have been accompanied by the development of new support concepts responsive to the needs of tactical

DOWNGRADED AT 3 YEAR INTERVALS;
DECLASSIFIED AFTER 12 YEARS.
DOD DIR 5200.10

FOR OT UT
69B018

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

AVDC-CG

SUBJECT: Senior Officer's Debriefing Report (U)

commanders and the individual trooper. The concept of accelerated fire base construction was developed to establish rapidly new fire bases to support combat operations without losing the element of surprise. The concept included rappelling engineers into a remote jungle area, constructing an LZ to bring in heavy equipment and firing artillery eight hours later.

c. Concurrent with its tactical operations, the Division interrelated a vigorous civic action program throughout the populated areas designed to exploit the success of the combat forces. These civic activities were an integral part of the overall pacification effort in Thua Thien Province. Thus, the Division played a major role in the rapid recovery of the civilian populace from the enemy's destructive 1968 TTT Offensive to a state of normalcy throughout the Province.

3. (C) Cooperation and Coordination with ARVN Forces:

a. It became apparent from the earliest days of my command that in order to insure a lasting success in our operations against the enemy forces in Thua Thien Province the troopers of the 101st Airborne Division must fight side by side with the GVN forces. To this end every operation of any significance was a combined operation with 101st Airborne Division units and 1st ARVN Division and/or Province units. To insure close coordination US and ARVN command posts were co-located for operations; and liaison was established with the 1st ARVN Division headquarters and regimental headquarters, Province headquarters and every district headquarters in Thua Thien.

b. As a result of these combined efforts in combat assaults, cordon operations, reconnaissance in force and ambushes, the Vietnamese forces have developed tremendously. The 1st ARVN Division is a highly proficient, professional fighting force and fights along side our troopers as equals; and they are treated as such. The Regional Force companies and Popular Force platoons, through their close association with Division forces, are now conducting combat assaults and operating extensively in the lowlands without assistance. Based on this significant improvement in capability, the Vietnamese forces have assumed the primary role in providing security for the coastal plains and populated areas of Thua Thien Province.

4. (C) Reconfiguration to Airmobile Organization: The 101st Airborne Division was reconfigured to the airmobile concept by USARPAC General Order dated 1 July 1968. The impact of the reorganization from airborne to airmobile was taken in stride by the Division. The Division had conducted many heliborne assaults prior to receiving its full compliment of aircraft. There were no major changes in operating procedures, merely an expansion of our capabilities. The increase in aircraft has allowed the Division to react instantaneously to intelligence reports and to greatly expand our sphere of influence and operations.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

AVDG-CG

SUBJECT: Senior Officer's Debriefing Report (U)

5. (C) Airmobile Operations:

a. Our airmobile techniques and tactics have evolved from our combat operations. With each succeeding operation we have gained experience, knowledge and confidence for future operations.

b. A major consideration in our airmobile operations was weather. The influence of weather and terrain on airmobile planning in the Division area of operation was significant, often being the determining factor in where and when operations would be conducted. The terrain with its triple canopy jungle and steep mountains, influenced the location of landing zones and fire support bases.

c. The Division's airmobility facilitated our numerous cordon operations. Our airmobility assisted greatly in the rapid emplacement of the blocking and maneuver forces, and in the surveillance of the area of operations, thus facilitating the element of surprise and contributing significantly to the success of these operations.

d. The airmobile force must have adequate artillery planned to support the scheme of maneuver. Aerial rocket artillery is excellent in most cases, but when utilized in triple canopy against hard targets such as reinforced bunkers its effectiveness is severely curtailed. This has led to the concept of accelerated fire base construction.

e. The resupply of combat forces in an airmobile environment led to the use of forward staging areas to reduce helicopter blade time by trucking supplies, ammunition and fuel as far forward as possible. This concept allowed the Division to make maximum use of its air assets for troop support.

f. The 101st Airborne Division has made the change to airmobile concepts and, with these new concepts and techniques, is defeating the NVA forces and forcing their retreat into Laos. The professionalism, training, and experience of the Division is indicated by the precision and organization of our combat assaults as demonstrated in the recent Operation APACHE SNOW with five battalions assaulting.

6. (C) Personnel Turnover:

a. The Division arrived in Vietnam in December of 1967 with over 10,000 soldiers participating in Operation Eagle Thrust. One year later the Division was faced with the rotation of over 6,000 personnel.

b. Since a large loss of personnel could also lead to a loss of expertise, a plan had to be devised to make the transition as smooth as possible, while

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

AVDG-CG

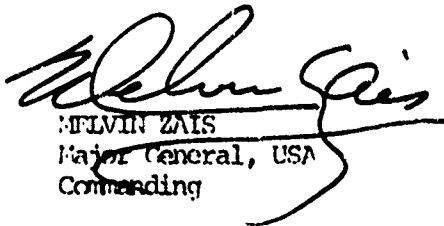
SUBJECT: Senior Officer's Debriefing Report (U)

retaining the combat effectiveness of the Division. The plan encompassed three main features: (1) Level off the departing personnel to a steady number each day; (2) Replacements would be requested 10 days early to allow sufficient time for travel, processing and training; and (3) The processing facilities would be augmented to expedite the transition. USARV indicated that they could accommodate us with 200 replacements a day beginning ten days prior to the first large exodus. In the final review of the plan it was evident that the personal touch was lacking, the impact of the functional system on the attitude of the men was extremely important to me as Division Commander. It was important that we give every courtesy possible and convey to each and every departing trooper the idea that his efforts and sacrifices were appreciated. To this end, band concerts, movies, uniform shops and other personal services were made available. Award ceremonies were held frequently and gifts were given to each departing trooper. These men left the command with dignity and pride in having been a Screaming Eagle. When the operation was over a total of 6,300 men had been outprocessed, and 6,000 men inprocessed in a period less than 30 days without loss of combat proficiency.

7. (C) The 101st Airborne Division has successfully met and defeated the North Vietnamese and Viet Cong Forces in the coastal plains and in the remote mountain areas. We have, in concert with our Vietnamese Allies, severely damaged the infrastructure in Thua Thien Province and have greatly assisted in the reestablishment of government control in the area. The tenacity and fighting ability of the "Screaming Eagle" trooper has never been more severely tested and his ability to adapt to new concepts and principles has never been more evident. The high morale and efficiency of the individual reflects the training, discipline, and devotion to duty of the airborne trooper. I feel that a great measure of our success was due to the placement of key individuals within the Division. The talent I had available was outstanding and the results of the Division stem from that talent. I am truly very proud to have commanded this great division in combat.

5 Incl

1. Intelligence
2. Operations
3. Administration
4. Logistics Operations
5. Civic Actions


MELVIN ZAIS
Major General, USA
Commanding

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

INTELLIGENCE

1. (C) Enemy Situation:

a. In July 1968, the 101st Airborne Division faced an enemy force consisting of 9 NVA Infantry Battalions, 2 Sapper Battalions, 1 NVA Artillery Battalion, and 7 local force companies. Enemy forces were disposed as follows:

(1) Tri Thien Hue Military Region, the highest level control authority in the area, was located in the vicinity of western Base Area 114.

(2) The 803d Regiment Headquarters and its subordinate infantry battalions were located in Base Area 114.

(3) The 9th Battalion, 90th Regiment was located in the Huont Tra Mountains in eastern Base Area 114.

(4) The 5th Regiment Headquarters and its 3 subordinate infantry battalions, 2 subordinate Sapper Battalions, and 1 subordinate artillery battalion were located in their base areas south of the Nui Ke Mountains and northwest of Leech Island.

(5) The 4th Regiment with its 2 subordinate infantry battalions were deployed in its traditional mountain base areas in Phu Loc (D).

(6) The local force companies were operating in their respective districts in the coastal plains.

(7) The 6th, 9th, and 29th Regiments were unlocated following their destruction and subsequent movement into Laos after Tet 1968.

b. In July, the enemy continued to avoid contact to refurbish from major defeats which had been dealt him in the lowlands by the 101st Airborne Division in May and June. These operations had thwarted the enemy's plan to re-occupy the city of Hue and had driven him from the coastal plains northwest and southeast of the Imperial City, into his mountainous base areas. During the month of August 1968, troopers of the 101st Airborne Division and 3d Brigade, 82d Airborne Division, conducted operations in the mountains which disrupted enemy supply activity and cost him heavy casualties. Operation Somerset Plain, conducted from 4-20 August 1968, disrupted the flow of material through the A Chau Valley and forced the 9th NVA Regiment to hastily withdraw into its Laotian sanctuary in Base Area 611. From 23 August to 3 September 1968, the 1-508 Airborne Infantry, 3d Brigade, 82d Airborne Division, conducted a successful operation in the Piedmont region west of Leech Island which routed the 5th NVA Regiment Headquarters from its base camp and resulted in 189 enemy KIA, 3 PW's, 685 IVC, and 46 CSVC.

DOWNGRADED AT 3 YEAR INTERVALS;
DECLASSIFIED AFTER 12 YEARS.
DOD DIR 5200.10

5

CONFIDENTIAL

Incl 1

CONFIDENTIAL

c. In September and October 1968, the 101st Airborne Division developed the "soft cordon" tactic and set a precedent for minimizing casualties suffered by innocent civilians. As a result of the Vinh Loc Island Cordon operation, conducted from 10-20 September 1968, the enemy suffered 154 KIA, 370 PW's (including 126 VCI), 176 IXC, 3 CSWC, 56 Ioi Chanh's, and 58 civil defendants. Subsequent "soft cordon" operations in the lowlands east of Hue and vigorously executed combined US and PF/PP operations in Quang Dien District also inflicted heavy casualties on the VC and VC Infrastructure. The C114, C115, C116, C117, C118, and C119 Local Force companies, which had strengths of approximately 100 men per company several months prior to Tet 1968 were reduced to fewer than 30 men. Additionally, the C3 Company, Phu Loc Armed Battalion was reduced from a strength of 90-100 men to a strength of approximately 30 men.

d. PW's from the 803d Regiment who were captured in September 1968, indicated that they were suffering from a severe shortage of rice and other foodstuffs. This shortage probably forced the 803d Regiment to withdraw to either Laos or North Vietnam.

e. In mid-October 1968, the enemy began to increase his resupply effort throughout Thua Thien Province. This activity peaked in late December 1968 and gradually diminished in January 1969. The area near the Rong Pung Valley was developed as a rear services installation and trans-shipment point. Additionally, enemy traffic was heavy along the Rao Trang River in Base Area 114 and in the Rao Dai River - southern A Chau Valley area.

f. A series of light contacts in January and February 1969 resulted in captured documents identifying the 806th Battalion, 6th Regiment, and revealed that the 6th Regiment had returned to northern Thua Thien Province and planned to attack allied installations in Phong Dien and Quang Dien Districts, to include Camp Evans and An Lo Bridge. Intelligence acquired during the first two weeks of February 1969 indicated that the 806th Battalion was establishing a commo-liaison route from the mountains to the lowlands in preparation for an attack. However, Operation Ohio Rapids inflicted heavy casualties on the enemy and thwarted his plans to attack the coastal plains northwest of Hue City.

g. In other areas, the enemy attempted to move into the lowlands in late January and early February 1969. Prolonged attacks increased in late January 1969. The 4th and 5th Regiments increased rice gathering, reconnaissance, and propaganda activities in the lowlands. However, these efforts were thwarted by successful allied cordon operations and ambushes. As a result of these operations and previous friendly operations, the civilian populace of Thua Thien Province enjoyed the Tet Holiday and were little affected by the enemy's "Winter-Spring" Offensive.

h. Beginning in early March, the division initiated Operation Massachusetts Striker which struck deep into the southern A Chau Valley to disrupt enemy supply activity and destroy any enemy units operating in the area. In late March and early April, allied forces made several contacts with the 816th Battalion,

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

9th Regiment from southwest of FB Veghel to the A Shau Valley. As a result of these contacts, this battalion was rendered combat ineffective. Operation Massachusetts Striker in the southern A Shau Valley destroyed supply depots, training areas, and captured material and foodstuffs, to include trucks, tons of rice, and mortar rounds.

i. This effort to interdict key LOC's was extended to northwestern Quang Nam Province, the northern A Shau Valley, and the Ruong Ruong Valley in April 1969. Large caches were found which disrupted any enemy plans to rebuild his forces in Thua Thien Province and also disrupted the enemy's planned offensive against Da Nang. In northwestern Quang Nam Province, 1-501 Airborne Infantry found a cache which included 13 Russian trucks, 1 Russian scout car, and large quantities of munitions and medical and signal equipment. In the northern A Shau Valley, 2-17 Cavalry and 3-187 Airborne Infantry, in late April 1969, captured more than 20 tons of rice, approximately 1200 mortar rounds, and 168 122mm rockets.

j. On the nights of 11-12 and 12-13 May 1969, the enemy initiated a country-wide offensive. The enemy attacks inflicted casualties on two 101st Airborne Division fire bases; Bastogne, YC 622097 and Airborne, YD 355071. However, the level of activity in Thua Thien Province was much lower than in other areas throughout Vietnam.

k. The primary forces remaining in the AO were the 4th and 5th Regiments. The 5th NVA Regiment has been constantly kept off balance and cannot initiate large scale offensive action. The 4th Regiment remained relatively inactive in his rear base areas. The 9th Regiment with only two effective battalions remained in the vicinity of the central A Shau Valley and Base Area 611 in Laos, as did the 6th Regiment. The local force companies were both ineffective and generally inactive.

l. VCI Activities: In February 1969, the VCI activity consisted mainly of rice and tax collection and propaganda in preparation for a spring offensive against the city of Hue. Terrorist activity remained at a low level probably caused by the VCI's fear of alienating the populace. After a post Tet lull at the beginning of March, VCI related incidents increased to near the monthly average of 60-80 incidents, with the main emphasis on rice and tax collection. Northern and southern Phong Dien District and the Phu Bai areas were the centers of heaviest VCI activity. During the period 20-21 March, a combined cordon of the Phu Bai area was conducted by elements of 2-327 Airborne Infantry and RF/PF units. This cordon resulted in 10 VC/NVA KIA, 21 PW's, 1 Hoi Chanh and 21 IWC. During the cordon, 171 Detainees were processed resulting in 5 VCI captured, 1 Civil Defendant (law violator), and 165 Innocent Civilians. In addition, miscellaneous equipment was destroyed. Of the PW's captured, 4 were from the Reconnaissance Company, 5th NVA Regiment. This cordon drastically reduced the Infrastructure's activities in the area for approximately 6 weeks. During the first two weeks in April, the Phu Loc District experienced a rash in terrorist activity whose purpose was apparently two fold. One, was to decrease the impact of the hamlet and village council elections in the district and secondly, to ensure thorough control of the population during the summer rice harvest. At the present time there are an estimated 2300 VCI identified in Thua Thien Province by MACV standards.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

2. (C) Intelligence Operations:

a. The early summer months of 1968 saw a significant change in enemy tactics. The NVA multi-battalion operations in May 1968 were characterized by attempts to seize and hold areas on the coastal plains. As a consequence of the heavy losses resulting from this method of operation, the enemy was forced to retreat to mountain base camps, leaving the tactical void filled by local force elements and the Viet Cong Infrastructure. As a result of this change in enemy tactics, corresponding modifications in US intelligence efforts were necessary. After the departure of the larger enemy units from the coastal plains, intelligence collection efforts were directed primarily against the VCI and assumed the characteristics of "police raids" in that US Infantry units joined forces with Regional Forces and Popular Force elements to continuously patrol and search suspected enemy areas. When a cordon was formed around an area, black lists were utilized for screening the villagers. Those lists were produced by a joint effort of 101st Airborne Division, Military Intelligence Detachment; the 525 Military Intelligence Group, and Phoenix personnel. Other than this activity, and an occasional engagement with a VC cell or commo-liaison element, significant contact with the enemy was rare during the mid-summer months.

b. While efforts on the coastal plains were directed toward the neutralization of the VCI, other forces attacked the enemy's jungle base camps. The cover of the jungle, and rare instances of capturing PW's and the fleeting but deadly engagement on hidden jungle trails, forced a heavy reliance on the collection of intelligence by specialized means. Coordination between the Division and the 521st River Division greatly improved the surveillance of the coastal waterways in the Division AO. Patrol craft and Division night observation device missions have resulted in an increased surveillance of illicit sampans traffic during the hours of darkness.

c. Air Cavalry Reconnaissance Activities. The 2-17 Cavalry with Company L (Rangers) 75th Infantry attached to them has provided a far reaching pair of eyes to the Division.

(1) Every major operation the Division has conducted since late August 1968 has utilized elements of divisional air cavalry in support. This capability was greatly expanded with the conversion to an air cavalry squadron in April 1969. The variety of missions the 2-17 Cavalry provided in this role can best be illustrated in operation Massachusetts Striker.

(2) The Cavalry Squadron initially put in elements to secure engineer parties during preliminary construction of fire bases to support operations. Throughout Massachusetts Striker, air cavalry troops provided armed aerial reconnaissance of the southern A Shau Valley. These missions provided ground commanders with information on enemy routes, movement and complexes. Rangers from the 75th Infantry were inserted in various tactically important areas to monitor enemy movement.

CONFIDENTIAL

(3) On 24 April 1969, elements of D/2-17 Cavalry were inserted to perform BDA in the northern A Shau Valley. While in the area they uncovered a large enemy weapons and supply cache.

d. Sensors.

(1) During the period 29-30 December 1968, the Division emplaced HAND-SID and MAGID sensors in enemy Base Area 114 in order to detect enemy infiltration along the Rao Trang - Song Bo River into the coastal plains and Hue city area. The sensor activations and readouts confirmed other intelligence sources that these routes were being used by the enemy as one of its infiltration routes into the coastal plains and Hue area. On 10 February 1969, 15 MINISIDS, 4 MAGIDS, and 2 PIRIDS were installed in the "Rocket Belt" in the vicinity of Nui Ke Mountain. These sensors assisted in preventing rocket attacks on the Hue/Phu Bai area.

(2) On 31 March 1969, four sensor strings were emplaced along trails believed used by elements of the 4th NVA Regiment in the Phu Loc area for infiltration and rice collection. Preplanned artillery fires were brought to bear on these areas when activations occurred and severely hampered enemy rice gathering operations in the Phu Loc area.

(3) In April 1969, the sensor program for the Division was enhanced with the assignment of sensor trained personnel. These personnel, stationed at the Division Headquarters, provide advice and coordination with subordinate units utilizing sensor devices. Tangible results have been derived through the use of these devices in that sensors employment coupled with immediate artillery reaction has restricted enemy infiltration on trails where sensors are employed to a minimum.

e. Ground Surveillance Radar. Short range ground surveillance radars have been used in a variety of roles. Primarily, they have been used to provide perimeter security for base camps and smaller fire bases. However, they have also been used to provide security for bridges and at times security for Vietnamese District Headquarters. The medium range system, AN/TPS-25, has been used to a very good advantage as a target acquisition radar in support of the brigades. It has also been used in conjunction with the short range radars to verify foot traffic on trails around brigade base camps. The ground surveillance radar capability was greatly increased with the arrival of a second AN/TPS-25 on 30 April 1969,

f. Combined Interrogation Center (CIC).

(1) As a result of very successful cordon operations in Vinh Loc and Phu Vang Districts during September and October 1968 as part of Operation Nevada Eagle, the use of a Combined Interrogation Center was proven to be a highly effective technique for screening, classification and disposition of detainees and for immediate exploitation of intelligence developed.

CONFIDENTIAL

(2) The CIC use of a centralized Detainee Collection Point offers several advantages. The principle advantage gained is that the specialized capabilities of each of the participating agencies can be used in the processing and exploitation of detainees. Further, by pooling all interrogation resources, a twenty-four hour operation is facilitated and intelligence developed is readily available for immediate exploitation.

(3) During Operation Nevada Eagle, the technique employed in the operation of the CIC was developed. Procedures for coordination among participating agencies were standardized, and the establishment of a CIC in combined operations was adopted as SOP.

(4) A typical CIC may include representatives from the National Police, National Police Special Branch, National Police Field Force, Sector S-2, Provincial Reconnaissance Unit, Census Grievance Committee, 101st Airborne Division Interrogation Section, Division Military Police and the S-2 of the participating US unit.

g. For normal day to day interrogation activities, ambiguities in translations of document readouts have been eliminated by instituting a procedure of utilizing only qualified linguists for the task of editing the readouts. Further, a practice of providing draft copies to the Division Order of Battle Section for comments prior to publication has greatly reduced inconsistencies of document readouts.

h. Counterintelligence Activities.

(1) During July 1968, Counterintelligence representatives from the Division were assigned, on a permanent basis to selected Districts in the Division's AO. The representatives were to insure that there were mutual exchanges of intelligence between the Division and US and GVN agencies represented at the District.

(2) With increased emphasis on the Pacification Program, enemy "shadow" government, the Viet Cong Infrastructure (VCI) became of increased significance. To provide the Division with all available information, pertaining to VCI, a CI representative was assigned to the Phoenix/Phoung Hoang Committee in Hue City on a permanent basis. The Division further organized and staffed a Political Order of Battle Section designed to analyze VCI information and inform intelligence personnel on all matters pertaining to VCI.

(3) The increasing use of Local National employees on Division Base Camps has greatly magnified the possibility of the enemy using members of the indigenous labor forces to commit acts of terrorism, espionage and sabotage on Division installations. To insure that the Division is adequately protected from this threat, a vigorous Base Camp Security Program was initiated on 29 January 1969. To date the program has resulted in:

(a) The establishment of a Labor Office and appointment of a Labor Officer responsible for managing the employment of Local Nationals and supervision of security screening, search and control of Local National entering or exiting the Division base areas.

CONFIDENTIAL

(b) The establishment of a program to insure PVO gate passes to all non-US personnel who have regular access to Division base areas.

(c) Weekly and bi-weekly security checks of troop congestion and messing facilities for detection of dangerous devices as well as daily inspection of mess facilities by mess personnel specifically for detection of dangerous devices.

(d) Publication of Division Regulations which establishes definite procedures for identification and control of indigenous personnel.

i. Joint Information Control Element (JICE).

(1) On 20 May 1969, a Joint Information Control Element and Reaction Force was established within the TOC of Headquarters, Thua Thien Sector to provide a rapid reaction/exploitation capability and to develop a system to validate the overall accuracy of information.

(2) Agencies participating in this joint effort are XXIV Corps, 101st Airborne Division, 1st ARVN Division, 525 Military Intelligence Group, 101st Military Intelligence Detachment, ARVN, Special Police Branch, Phoung Hong Committee, National Police, Revolutionary Development Committee, Sector G2, District Chiefs, NIO and elements of the MSS.

(3) The 101st Airborne Division furnishes a liaison team as part of the JICE to include an Artillery Forward Observer that accompanies the sector reaction force when that force is committed.

//

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

COMBAT OPERATIONS

1. (C) NEVADA EAGLE (17 May 1968 - 28 February 1969)

This operation was a Division sized operation targeted against the Viet Cong local force and infrastructure in the lowlands and the main force and North Vietnamese Army units in the mountainous canopied areas. The overall objective was the maintenance of a favorable environment for the continuation of the Government's pacification plan in Thua Thien Province. This nine and a half month operation encompassed all aspects of the Division's operations including reconfiguration, combat assaults into the Ashau Valley and jungle areas, combined cordon operations and reconnaissance in force operations. This successful campaign concluded with the Viet Cong infrastructure disintegrated and badly demoralized, the NVA forces being pushed deep into the mountainous areas, and the city of Hue having a peaceful Tet season. The results of NEVADA EAGLE were 3299 NVA/VC KIA, 853 NVA/VC CIA, and 714 Hoi Chanh.

2. (C) SOMERSET PLAIN (4 August - 20 August 1968)

On 4 August, units of the 1st Brigade, 2/502 Infantry and 2/327 Infantry, conducted combat assaults into the Ashau Valley in the vicinity of A Loui and Ta Lat, respectively. As the two battalions conducted the combat assaults, 1/327 Infantry maintained blocking positions astride Highway 547A, east of Ta Lat, to assist in providing a safe air cordon for the combat assault. Prior to 4 August, 1/327 Infantry conducted extensive sweep operations along Highway 547A to clear enemy forces from the area and along the flight path of the combat assault forces. On 5 August, a two battalion task force (2d and 3d Battalions) from the 1st ARVN Regiment, 1st ARVN Division conducted a combat assault into the valley in the vicinity of Ta Bat. During the period 5 August - 17 August, both the 1st Brigade and the 1st ARVN Regiment forces conducted reconnaissance in force operations in the valley. The enemy forces encountered were considerably smaller in size than anticipated by the intelligence sources and no major enemy caches or installations were found. On the nights of 16-17 and 17-18 August, elements of the 326 Engineer Battalion and two six-man teams from the Division Long Range Patrol Company implanted minefields and sensors at three choke points in the valley.

Each mine was booby trapped and fitted with a delay fuze to destroy the mine after a set period of time. The sensors were monitored by a station, which was positioned on FP Eagle's Nest and had a direct telephone line to the artillery unit located there. An immediate response by artillery fire was provided when sensor devices detected enemy movement in the vicinity of the minefield. Aerial reconnaissance indicated that this procedure denied the enemy the use of this principal IOC over two weeks after the maneuver units were extracted. The maneuver elements were extracted on 18 August and 19 August, and the operation was ended on 20 August.

The results of the combat operations in the valley by the US/ARVN forces were: 131 NVA/VC KIA, 4 POW's, and 57 IVC.

/s

CONFIDENTIAL

DOWNGRADED AT 3 YEAR INTERVALS;
DECLASSIFIED AFTER 12 YEARS.
DOD DIR 5200.10

Incl 2

CONFIDENTIAL

3. (C) AN TRUYEN (8-9 August 1968)

On 8-9 August the 1/501st Infantry, National Police Field Forces (61 personnel), a Popular Force squad, a Psyops broadcast team, elements of the Provincial Reconnaissance Units and Police Special Branch Teams conducted a cordon operation in the hamlets of An Truyen (YD 8126) and An Trieu Son (YD 8027). Numerous agent reports had indicated the presence of at least one VC platoon in the area. In addition, information from agents also described the methods which the VC used to elude the previous Allied sweeps through the same area. On the morning of 8 August 1968 A, B, and C/1/501st Infantry, with NPIF forces, swept overland and established a cordon around the two hamlets. Simultaneously, US Navy Patrol Air Cushion Vehicles (PACV), not previously used in the area, awaited approximately 5 km away for the word to move to the scene of the cordon. After the cordon was established, the PACV's swept toward the cordoned hamlets. Following the arrival of the PACV's, observation of the VC movement and their suspected locations was maintained by helicopters, which flew to the scene only after the VC had committed themselves to hiding in the water. The ability of the PACV's to enter the shallow marshy areas, combined with concussion grenades thrown into the rice paddies and the noise of the PACV's, caused the hiding VC to vacate their watery hiding places. Following interrogation of the 104 detainees, 23 were classified as PW's and 40 were classified as Civil Defendants (law violators).

The professional manner in which the operation was executed is evident as 43 VC were killed and 23 VC and 11 individual weapons captured without a single friendly casualty. The key elements of this successful operation were the quick reaction to good intelligence, maximum use of available resources, detailed planning and coordination, and surprise.

4. (C) PHU VANG (27 September - 10 October 1968)

On 27 September - 10 October the 1/501 Infantry, 2/17 Cavalry, and Vietnamese forces from Phu Vang (D) and Huong Thuy (D) conducted a soft cordon operation to attack and destroy the VC infrastructure in Phu Vang District. During the period June-August, elements of 1/501 had frequent contact with small groups of VC, and encountered numerous booby traps in the Phu Vang area, but had not been able to close with and defeat large VC forces. On the morning of 27 September, P and C Companies, 1/501 Infantry moved overland to establish cordons and searched around the hamlets vic YD 815265 and YD 807272. US Navy Patrol Air Cushion Vehicles (PACV) patrolled the waterways adjacent to the cordoned hamlets. 1/501 Infantry in the north (YD 8027-YD 8322), 2/54 ARVN on the east (YD8322-YD8319), 2/17 Cavalry on the south (YD 8319-7920), established a cordon prior to darkness on 27 September 1968. The 2/54 ARVN Battalion swept across the island on 28 September on three axes, fragmenting the enemy elements. During the ensuing searches conducted by the 1/54 ARVN and by blocking forces, the Allies killed 96 VC, and captured 174 VC, 153 individual weapons and 8 crew served weapons. In addition PSYOPS missions conducted during the operation resulted in 46 Hoi Chanhs returning to the GVN. Of the 174 PW captured, 98 were classified as members of the VC infrastructure.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

5. (C) VINH LOC (10 September - 20 September 1968)

The first of the soft cordon operations was conducted on the peninsula of Vinh Loc, a long time VC stronghold. The operation began with the 2/54 and 3/54 ARVN Battalions occupying blocking positions west of Vinh Loc Island from YD 940204 to ZD 026110 on 10 September to drive the enemy across the water into Vinh Loc District. At first light on 11 September, 3/7 ARVN Cavalry Troop moved from Col Co Beach (YD 8432) southeast and occupied a blocking position to block the escape routes to the northwest from the island. At 0700 hours 1/501 Infantry and 1/54 ARVN Battalions combat assaulted into seven separate LZ's. As the combat assault was in progress, the 3/7 Cavalry Troop swept down from its blocking position and linked up with the 1/54 ARVN Battalion. As the 1/501 Infantry moved off their LZ's, PF platoons were lifted from the Vinh Loc headquarters and joined the US infantry companies. All units then attacked rapidly to the south in their zones, using the Special Branch Forces and LPFF teams for search, interrogation and identification of the suspects detained. Intelligence gained from these teams was immediately exploited as the operation progressed. The results of the operation were, 154 NVA/VC KIA, 126 POW, and 179 weapons.

6. (C) Operation PHU VANG II and III (25 October - 6 November 1968) incorporated elements of the 1st Battalion, 501st Infantry, 54th ARVN Regiment, Regional Force Companies, along with National Police and US Naval Forces. The objective of the operation was the destruction of the enemy, his supplies and installations in the rice growing area just east of Hue. Intelligence had been received indicating that the Viet Cong infrastructure was attempting to reestablish some control in Phu Vang, Huong Thuy and Phu Thu Districts of Thua Thien Province. Contemplated in the operation was the cordon and sweep of the area, followed by intensive search with emphasis on saturation patrolling, extensive night ambushes and rapid exploitation of intelligence information. The operation was promptly initiated with forces assuming their blocking positions. Once the cordon was established, the search of the area commenced with positive results. PHU VANG II and III was immensely successful since it dissolved the existent lines of continuity within the Viet Cong infrastructure, and resulted in heavy enemy losses of personnel and weapons - 55 killed, 67 prisoners of war (28 of whom were members of the Viet Cong infrastructure), and 60 individual weapons.

7. (C) The TROU BRIDGE CORDON (10 November - 18 November 1968) involved the 1st Battalion, 327th Infantry, a task force from the ARVN 7th Armored Cavalry, the 13th Coastal Group, and elements of Regional Forces, National Police Field Forces and US Naval Forces. The combined elements established a soft cordon and conducted a search operation of the Troui village area. Of the 1,249 personnel processed through the Combined Intelligence Center, 23 were classified as members of the Viet Cong infrastructure. In addition to the detained personnel, 10 Viet Cong were killed and 2 individual weapons were captured.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

8. (C) Operation NAM LOA I (18 November - 7 December 1968) consisted of the 2d Battalion, 501 Infantry, and elements of the 3d ARVN Regiment. Intelligence obtained prior to the operation indicated that the 5th NVA Regiment, including supporting elements, had shifted its area of operation from the traditional base camp around Nuike to the southeast. Intelligence placed the enemy regiment in two valleys SW of Leach Island (YC 838984). The combined element's mission was to "find and destroy the 5th NVA Regiment, its leader Colonel Mot, and its base areas." The operation was initiated by a combat assault of elements of the 2d Battalion, 501st Infantry onto Fire Base Panther III (YD 812082). Following the assault supporting artillery was moved to Panther II (YD 798107) to provide supporting and blocking fires for later combat assaults made by the Combined Forces. Throughout the operation combat assaults and flanking maneuvers, in addition to massed fire power, were conducted to trap and destroy the enemy regiment. When new information was received as to the location of the 5th NVA Regiment elements were moved into position rapidly and effectively. When the operation terminated figures indicated that the enemy had lost heavily -- 78 killed, 65 individual and 13 crew-served weapons captured, plus large quantities of mortar rounds, TNT, small arms/automatic weapons rounds, and 122mm rockets. Friendly losses were exceedingly low -- 6 killed and 39 wounded.

9. (C) Operation PHU VANG IV (11 December 1968 - 4 January 1969) was initiated to interdict the regrouping of the Viet Cong infrastructure and local forces following Operation PHU VANG II and III in Phu Vang, Thong Thuy, and Phu Thu Districts of Thua Thien Province. Elements participating in the operation were the 1st Battalion, 501st Infantry, the 54th ARVN Regiment, Regional and District Forces, and US Naval Forces. As in Operation PHU VANG II and III, the area of operation was cordoned, swept and intensively searched, with emphasis placed on rapid exploitation of intelligence gained from detainees processed through the Combined Intelligence Center. Combined Allied Forces, as in the previous operation, made imposing strides in rooting out enemy forces, even though the latter had made tremendous progress in recruiting and reorganization in the area. Enemy personnel losses throughout the operation were high -- 75 killed and 99 prisoners of war, 35 of whom were confirmed members of the Viet Cong infrastructure. In addition, 60 individual weapons were captured, and numerous bunker complexes were destroyed. Combined friendly losses were low -- 2 killed and 12 wounded.

10. (C) Operation PAWLINS VALLEY (16 December - 24 December 1968) was conducted in Nam Hoa District, Thua Thien Province, an area which intelligence data indicated was the Base Area of the 6th NVA Regiment. Participating in the operation were the 1st Battalion, 506th Infantry, the 3d Battalion, 187th Infantry, and elements of the 3d ARVN Regiment. The mission assigned to the combined forces was to conduct combat assaults and reconnaissance in force operations in the assigned area of operations and to locate and destroy VC/NVA forces, base camps and caches. Throughout the operation, several combat assaults were conducted, but with minimal contacts since the enemy avoided engagement with Allied Forces. The success or failure of PAWLINS VALLEY should not be measured in the number of enemy killed (8), but in the effect it had on the enemy. The enemy was forced to withdraw deeper into mountainous areas, abandoning forward areas to Allied destruction. Thus, the enemy lost the capacity to launch operations in the immediate future from the Nam Hoa area.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

11. (C) Operation TODD FOREST (31 December 1968 - 13 January 1969) involved the 1st Battalion, 506th Infantry and elements of the 1st ARVN Regiment. Intelligence reports placed several NVA battalions in the Nam Hoa District, a known enemy base area and infiltration route. Combined forces conducted combat assaults and reconnaissance in force operations in the assigned area of operation to locate and destroy VC/NVA forces, base camps, and materiel caches. Throughout the operation contact was light, but numerous bunker complexes and caches were discovered and destroyed. The operation resulted in 12 enemy killed, and 26 individual weapons captured in addition to large quantities of rice, mortar rounds, and Viet Cong currency. Friendly forces suffered two men wounded during the operation.

12. (C) Operation PLATTE CANYON (6 January 1969 - 5 February 1969) involved elements of the 2d Battalion, 502d Infantry, and the 1st and 2d Battalions, 327th Infantry, in addition to elements of the ARVN 7th AAV Task Force, and 54th ARVN Regiment. Intelligence obtained prior to the operation indicated that contact with the enemy would be substantial as the enemy would attempt to defend his rear supply and staging areas in the Ruong Ruong Valley. Fire bases Dagger and Outless were constructed to give artillery support to the later combat assaults and reconnaissance in force operations in the Ruong Ruong and Elephant Valleys against elements of the 4th NVA Regiment. Moderate enemy contact was experienced, but in most instances the enemy elected to retreat and avoid substantial contacts. In addition to reconnaissance in force operations by company elements, the reconnaissance platoon patrolled the area of operations and discovered and destroyed a large cache and staging area. The maneuver elements successfully accomplished their assigned mission of securing population centers and key installations along QL 1, and in doing so killed or captured a substantial number of the local Viet Cong Infrastructure members in the assigned area of operations. When the operation concluded on 5 February enemy losses were 80 VC/NVA killed, 10 prisoners of war, and 72 individual and crew-served weapons captured, in addition to a large quantity of enemy materiel. Friendly forces suffered 10 KIA and 19 WIA.

13. (C) Operation SHERMAN PEAK (24 January - 9 February 1969) was launched by the 1st Battalion, 502d Infantry, D Company, 1st Battalion, 501st Infantry, and the 3/3d ARVN Regiment. Intelligence information (SLAR, Sniffer and VR missions) indicated that enemy activity had increased, and that the enemy was moving personnel and equipment from rear staging areas in the A Shau Valley in a northerly direction along Route 547, and the Rao Mai River into areas near FSB Veghel (YD 552030). Working in conjunction with the 3/3d ARVN Regiment, the 1st Battalion, 502d Infantry Task Force conducted rapid combat assaults and reconnaissance in force operations in the vicinity of FSB Veghel to locate and destroy enemy forces, installations, prevent enemy infiltration along Route 547 and provide protection for engineer reconnaissance teams along Route 547. The operation concluded on 9 February with the combined forces making little contact with enemy elements, resulting in 1 NVA KIA and a large munitions cache discovered and destroyed.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

14. (C) Operation OHIO RAPIDS (24 January - 28 February 1969) was conducted by elements of the 1st and 2d Battalions, 506th Infantry, and 3d Battalion, 187th Infantry, in addition to elements of the 1st ARVN Regiment. The Allied Forces combined to strike deep into suspected base areas of the 6th NVA Regiment to engage and destroy their security forces, cache materials, and base camp areas. Enemy contact for the first several days of the operation was light and fleeting, ranging from trail watchers and snipers to an estimated reinforced squad defending fortified positions. The enemy appeared to be employing delaying tactics to allow for the withdrawal of the main elements to the north into Base Area 101 and westward deeper into the mountains. Therefore, the maneuver forces were directed to continue the pursuit north of the Ngan O' Lau River to destroy the fleeing enemy and to insure that the enemy had not in fact relocated in Base Area 101 since Operation TODD FOREST (31 December - 13 January), in preparation for a new TET Offensive. In the course of the operation several combat assaults and reconnaissance in force operations were conducted throughout the suspected enemy infested areas resulting in the discovery and destruction of the 6th NVA Regimental Command Post. The sum effect of the operation was the disruption of any 6th NVA Regimental plans to launch offensive operations during the TET season, forcing them to disperse and relocate, and preventing them from deploying forces forward for attacks into the lowlands. Enemy losses were heavy as the figures were totaled following the completion of the operation on 28 February. 102 VC/NVA were killed, 5 prisoners of war were captured, in addition to 73 individual and 15 crew-served weapons. Friendly losses were light -- 6 US KIA and 6 ARVN KIA.

15. (C) Operation SPORANE RAPIDS (20 February - 3 March 1969) was conducted by elements of the 2d Battalion, 502d Infantry, 3d Battalion, 187th Infantry (OPCON to 1st Brigade) and supporting artillery. Intelligence obtained prior to the initiation of the operation indicated that elements of the 5th NVA Regiment were located in the Lam Hoa area and using the area as a rear support base to cache supplies, and the Ta Trach and Pho Mai Rivers as lines of communication to resupply their combat elements in the forward areas. It was believed the enemy would withdraw, employing delaying tactics, to the A Shau and Rung Luong Valleys rather than defend his base areas. The 2d Battalion, 502d Infantry was to secure FSB MONDANDY, construct and secure FSB SPYAR using the accelerated fire support base construction concept; thereafter conduct reconnaissance in force operations in conjunction with the 3d Battalion, 187th Infantry in their respective AO to locate and destroy base areas and caches, locate and interdict enemy lines of communication, and fix and destroy enemy troop concentrations. Inclement weather slowed construction of FSB SPYAR and the combat assaults of the maneuver forces for several days. Once in the area the maneuver elements encountered limited enemy contact and were extracted on 3 March 1969. Enemy personnel losses during the operation were: 9 KIA, and 2 wounded. Friendly personnel losses were 3 killed, and 11 wounded.

16. (C) Operation KENTUCKY JUMP (1 March - continuing) -- a Division-wide operation -- was initiated at the termination of Operation MINADA FABLE. The primary missions of the operation are; to interdict enemy base areas and infiltration routes, to seek out and destroy the NVA/VC forces, to detect, capture or destroy local Viet Cong Infrastructure and their sympathizers, and to disrupt

CONFIDENTIAL

the routes of supply between the rice producing lowlands and the mountain base areas. In addition the 101st Airborne Division in cooperation and coordination with the 1st ARVN Division and Government of Vietnam agencies will conduct combined operations throughout Thua Thien Province to increase the effectiveness of the ARVN forces and to maintain the favorable environment for the Government of Vietnam's overall pacification plan.

17. (C) Operation MASSACHUSETTS SPRINGER (1 March - 8 May 1969). In February intelligence had indicated an increase in the enemy activity in the southern A Shau Valley. This activity included road, bunker and way station construction, and in addition three NVA battalions were identified in the area. Construction was begun on two fire bases - FURY and WHIP - on the edge of the valley, but poor weather conditions made it impossible to conduct airmobile assaults. As a diversion when the weather cleared C Company, 1st Battalion, 502d Infantry was air assaulted into FB Veghel and immediately gained contact, killing fourteen NVA. Subsequent air assaults of the 1st Battalion, 502d Infantry; 2d Battalion, 501st Infantry; 2d Battalion, 327th Infantry (OPCON to 2d Brigade 22 March later

replaced by 1st Battalion, 501st Infantry (15 April)), and 2d and 3d Battalion, 3d ARVN Regiment, bring the total number of units on the ground to five battalions. Combat assaults and reconnaissance in force operations indicated the enemy was delaying and moving his units back into Laos. Reaction to a captured document resulted in the discovery of one of the largest caches to date in the 101st Airborne Division's area of operation. The operation was ended on 8 May with the following results: 176 NVA/VC KIA, 2 POW's, 859 weapons captured.

18. (C) Operation BRISTOL BOOTS (25 April - 8 May 1969). Intelligence data gained prior to the initiation of the operation indicated increased enemy troop movement, stockpiling of materiel, and a massing of heavy weapons in the Ruong Ruong Valley and surrounding areas. The primary mission of the units involved - 2d Battalion, 327th Infantry, 3d Squadron, 5th ACAV (-), C Company, 2-34 Armor, and 1st Battalion, 54th ARVN Regiment - was to conduct airmobile and armored cavalry operations into the Ruong Ruong Valley to seek out and destroy enemy units and materiel. This operation terminated on 15 May with 22 NVA/VC KIA, 1 POW, and 27 weapons captured.

19. (C) Operation APACHE SNOI (10 May - continuing). On 10 May the 3d Brigade in cooperation with the 1st and 3d ARVN Regiments and in coordination with the 9th Marine Regiment initiated XXIV Corps Operation Operation APACHE SNOI in the northern A Shau Valley. 3d Brigade employed the 1st Battalion, 506th Infantry, the 2d Battalion, 501st Infantry, the 3d Battalion, 187th Infantry, and TF 3d Squadron, 5th Cavalry (1-2-506 Infantry OPCONED). 1st ARVN Regiment employed the 2d, 3d, and 4th Battalions, and the 3d ARVN Regiment employed its 1st Battalion. On D-Day the 1-506th Infantry, 3-187th Infantry, 2-501st Infantry, 4-1st ARVN and one company of the 2-1st ARVN conducted multiple battalion assaults along the Laotian borders behind known enemy defenses oriented towards the A Shau Valley. These assaults and subsequent operations were supported by ten (10) batteries of artillery located in fire bases on the eastern mountains overlooking the Valley.

CONFIDENTIAL

The 3-1st and 1-3d ARVN Battalions reinforced those already operating in the vicinity of the Valley. Extensive preping of the area of operations, with particular emphasis on the flight routes and on the LZ's, air lights, TAC air, tube and aerial rocket artillery, and detailed reconnaissance of the LZ's by the air cavalry squadron prior to insertion produced highly professional and successful battalion combat assaults, without incident, into a traditional enemy stronghold. The 3-187th Infantry encountered enemy resistance as did the 1-506th Infantry after the insertions. While the resistance against the 1-506th Infantry was quickly eliminated with 12 NVA KIA, the 3-187th Infantry contact grew heavier. The enemy dug-in in fortified bunkers along Dong Ap Bia Ridge (VC 3298) maintained determined resistance to repeated assaults by the 3-187th Infantry, and reinforced their positions nightly from Laos. As enemy resistance continued the 2-501st Infantry, 1-506th Infantry and the 2-3d ARVN battalions were employed on all sides of the ridge and on 20 May a coordinated attack against the heavily bunkered ridge resulted in vicious close-in fighting and after a two (2) hour battle, battalion objectives were secured on the ridge and the enemy retreated into Laos. A detailed search of the ridge complex is currently underway; however, the enemy suffered awesome losses in comparison to his known strength and it is judged from the 454 bodies thus far counted that two battalions of 29th NVA Regiment have been rendered ineffective. Results as of 22 May were: 616 NVA KIA, 2 POW's, 89 IVC, 25 CSWC, and a large assortment of captured ammunition.

20. (C) Lessons Learned.

a. Soft Cordon Operations:

(1) The success of the technique of the "Soft Cordon" bears elaboration. The soft cordon is characterized by a limited use of firepower resulting in minimum property damage and injury to civilians, and slow, painstaking searches of villages and suspicious areas by the sweeping and cordon forces. The cordon force serves a dual purpose, it blocks, and at the same time, searches. The so-called blocking positions are not static defensive positions as the term infers, but are moving, searching troops who make detailed searches. They occupy as well as serve as a "noose" around the cordoned area. The protracted occupation of area causes the concealed VC to become impatient and hungry forcing them to compromise their positions.

(2) The following basic principles are applied in order to insure a successful operation:

(a) The operation is planned in detail and closely coordinated with all the agencies concerned, both ARVN and US. Normally the final coordination meeting with representatives from each element involved in the plan is withheld until the day prior to the operation is to begin as to not compromise the plan. Strict security is maintained.

(b) A Combined Operation Center is established for control of the operation. Representation from all elements involved in the cordon are co-located so that all plans and operations can be closely coordinated, thus insuring rapid response to the developing situation.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

(c) A Combined Interrogation Center is also established under the control of the unit's S2 and includes representatives from all Vietnamese and US intelligence agencies. Through this center all prisoners can be rapidly exploited and immediate action taken to exploit the intelligence gained.

b. Accelerated FSB Construction Concept: Early in my tour it was apparent that construction of fire support bases to support the assaulting forces was a critical part of our operations. No natural cleared areas existed, so to provide the fire support a fire base had to be constructed. Yet this construction if started prior to the operation would immediately alert the enemy to our plans. To offset this the accelerated fire base construction network was initiated. Sites that were mutually supporting and that adequately covered the entire area of operation were selected. Once selected those sites were thinned by airstrikes, 10,000 pound bomb drops and artillery. Then, as needed, the site would be activated and the fire base constructed on an accelerated schedule, normally within eight hours. As the maneuvering forces moved out of range the fire base would be stripped of all materials and closed and a new FB opened. As we continued to operate in virgin territory more and more fire base were built until we are now at the point that we can reactivate a fire base and conduct our assault with sufficient artillery support without compromising the operation anywhere in the area of operation.

c. Booby-trap Clearing Operations. This aspect of operations became paramount during Operation NEVADA EAGLE. The NVA/VC Forces had employed mines and booby traps throughout the area of operations in a harassing role and to impede the movement of troops. The NVA/VC Forces left safety lanes through the mine fields and, if these could be located, movement could be as rapid as the combat situation would allow. However, usually these lanes could not be located. Numerous methods were then used to breach the fields. The bangalore torpedo used in advance of infantry to explode mines was the most effective means employed. Following the exploding bangalore torpedo, men in heavy flak suits and engineers with mine sweepers would sweep for unexploded mines and booby traps. In addition, infantrymen armed with probes and grappling hooks greatly assisted in clearing an area. Finally in areas where they could be employed effectively used, artillery, airstrikes, bulldozer-Rome plows, and scout dogs were utilized. These steps have significantly improved the confidence and morale of troops operating in a booby-trapped environment and consequently have resulted in impressive statistics for the Division in clearing areas without receiving heavy casualties.

d. Coordination with Vietnamese Forces.

(1) One of the most significant factors contributing to the success of the 101st Airborne Division is the rapport and spirit of cooperation which exist between the US and Vietnamese forces. Close working relationships have been established at every level. No tasks or mission is undertaken independently; rather, operations are planned, conducted and controlled jointly. This is true in day to day operations as well as the deliberately planned cordon operations and combat assaults in the jungle.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

(2) To facilitate this coordination, permanent liaison was established with each district, sector and the 1st Infantry Division (ARVN). Additionally the co-location of command posts, coupled with daily visit by US commanders and staffs with their counterparts, greatly enhanced the coordination effect and the control of operations.

(3) This program has met with resounding success resulting in significant improvement in the capability of the Vietnamese Forces. Based on experience gained in working with US Forces, the Vietnamese Forces, including Regional and Popular Force Units, have developed to the point where they now conduct highly successful independent day and night operations.

ADMINISTRATION

I would like to emphasize the area which held my principal concern and attention as division commander - the personnel policies, administration and personnel support for the soldiers of the 101st Airborne Division. I considered this area of such importance that I devoted 90% of my time to assure its success. I did not utilize any fancy gimmicks or what one might consider newly discovered techniques in the handling of my personnel. Rather my guidance to my staff and commanders was clear and simple - require every trooper to do his very best, insuring that each is treated with dignity as he performs his assignment. If everyone concerned kept this principle in mind, everything fell into place. Such was the case.

Realizing that the American soldier deserves to be led by the best, I paid particular attention to the selection and utilization of my commanders at all levels. In order to provide a base of experience and continuity, my brigade commanders served in that capacity for one year. Expertise and stability at that level minimized the effect due to changes of command approximately every six months at the battalion and company level. As just outlined, my battalion commanders normally had command for six months. I personally selected each candidate for battalion command from the command recommended nominations forwarded by USARV. Each had to meet the criteria of successful company command as well as battalion, brigade and/or division level staff. Those who had recent troop experience were assigned to command but only after each received a thorough indoctrination from the staff agencies and separate commanders. Additionally, each was required to attend an air mobility school which I devised, ensuring that each commander and staff officer gained the expertise and thus the confidence to utilize the Division's airmobility capability to maximum advantage. When an officer's command time had been completed and the tactical situation allowed, I normally assigned him as one of my principal staff officers, thus capitalizing on his recent combat experience. If a prospective candidate had not recently been with troops, he was assigned to the division staff or as a brigade executive officer in order to give him time to observe and get the feel for operations in the division. A similar system was used for assigning majors to division staff and troop units. I consider this procedure to have been a good workable solution which produced outstanding results, in that I was not compelled to relieve a single brigade, battalion, or company commander during my entire tour as division commander. As the Commanding General, I used many means of getting the word to the troopers that I was in Vietnam to fight and fulfill my mission and that I really looked to the well being of every soldier assigned to assist me. I consider one of my most successful means to have been my practice of meeting, in my office, each field grade officer assigned to the division. These interviews gave me the opportunity to project, first hand, and face to face, my deep and abiding concern for the welfare of each soldier. I charged each field grade officer with the responsibility of putting my expression to work in the field and staff agencies. They have enthusiastically complied. This, of course, was only one of many means I used to establish communication with the trooper in the field. I personally wrote a column in the Division newspaper entitled "Lucky Eagle Sez" where I discussed matters of interest to the troopers. Moreover, I used this means as a vehicle for making public commendations for outstanding accomplishments by individual troopers or units. Much to my delight the column was well-read and well received by my soldiers, in that I received a splendid response

from many troopers by personal letters to me, thanking me for the thoughts expressed, as well as offering suggestions for other discussion topics. Because all division publications were an excellent means of reaching the troops, as well as being of historical value in telling the story of the division, I personally reviewed them insuring that the story of the soldier was told in both pictures and stories. The publications included the Division newspaper, The Screaming Eagle, a quarterly magazine, entitled Rendezvous with Destiny and a division yearbook.

Leaving routine administration to my staff, I spent the better part of my day visiting my troopers in every possible environment and meeting and talking to as many of the officers and men as possible, explaining the reasons for their presence in Vietnam and the reasons for doing what was asked of them. Scholars of the American soldier established long ago that the soldier who is well informed fights well. My efforts in this regard and the resultant successes lend further credence to this principle.

During my tenure of command, the 101st Airborne Division had to change its organization in order to be outfitted to operate in the airmobile concept. This required many new units joining the division as well as the departure of some which were attached to the Division for a specific purpose. I made it a point to personally greet and speak to all incoming units and to insure that everything was ready for their arrival. This included billeting, efficient inprocessing and informative briefings. All of this was not only beneficial from the morale standpoint but also aided in having the unit fully operational in minimum time. Similar actions were taken for departing units in appreciation for their outstanding service to the division, and illustrated to them that although they were leaving they were not being forgotten.

Because the 101st Airborne Division deployed as a division in a relatively short period of time in late 1967, a large personnel turn-over came about in November-early December 1968 when more than 6,000 division personnel rotated from RVN to CONUS for further assignment or to terminate their military service. Detailed planning, coordination and maximum effort was required to quickly outprocess these individuals and inprocess a similar number of troops so that the fighting ability of the division would not be impaired. This effort was not limited to just producing a smooth flow of personnel. I wanted each departing trooper to know that his efforts, accomplishments and sacrifices were recognized and appreciated. To that end, out-processing was done quickly and efficiently, entertainment in the form of continuous movies and live entertainment was available, as well as the opportunity to just rest and relax. This magnificent effort produced a bonus effect in that the new Screaming Eagles saw what was being done for the departees, vividly illustrating that "The 101st takes care of its own."

As you realize, for obvious reasons, but primarily because it points to an infusion requirement which uproots the very stability and esprit which can come only with molding and retaining a fighting unit, I have infused with other divisions to the bare minimum pointing instead to other means to spread the departure impact, thus retaining the integrity of my units.

The one which has been most successful in reducing large DEROS humps and retaining expertise is the voluntary extension of foreign service tours. I have encouraged this program because of the obvious advantages to the division as well as to the individuals who participate. Since the division's arrival in Vietnam more than 3,500 Screaming Eagles have extended their tours. Earlier I mentioned that the fighting ability of the division was not impaired during the DEROS hump of November-December 1968. I believe there were basically two reasons for this: One, the troopers arrived in Vietnam well-trained and properly oriented by the training base in CONUS; the second reason was the additional in-country training each received at the Screaming Eagle Replacement Training School I ran at Bien Hoa, my division rear. Here our newly arrived troopers were instilled with the Airborne Spirit, learned the methods and capabilities of the enemy, and developed a positive belief in their abilities to meet and defeat him in any locale. The motto of Screaming Eagle Replacement Training School is "Taker of Men" and it was just that. My battalion commanders have been most impressed with the quality of replacements received and their outstanding combat records have further enhanced the division's accomplishments.

I have always considered awards and decorations as a real morale builder and as a division commander I have had a liberal policy in regards to Army Commendation Medals for Achievement and Bronze Star Medals for Service. This insured that all deserving troopers were recognized by appropriate awards through the adherence to the regulation governing the presentation of such awards. In order to provide immediate recognition for acts of valor I often presented impact awards as soon as possible after the action. I must say that this was one of my more pleasant duties because it gave me an opportunity to meet and talk with these valiant troopers. To further enhance acts of valor and add a personal touch from the 101st Airborne Division, I devised a "Brave Eagle Coin" to provide Screaming Eagles a pocket souvenir to attest to their heroism during the Division's Rendezvous with Destiny in Vietnam. These coins have been well-received and further enhance the indomitable spirit of all Screaming Eagles. I also insured that my staff officers who provided me with so much valuable assistance were recognized for their efforts. Appropriate formations were held where the departing officers were presented an award for their contribution and a plaque and a paratrooper statuette. I also added my personal commendations and thanks for a job well done publicly at this time.

A ceremony with all divisional units represented was held for the arrival and departure of my Assistant Division Commanders. Appropriate honors were rendered and presentations were made at these ceremonies.

As Division Commander, I was keenly aware of the division history and my responsibility to ensure that all members of the division were conscious of the noble and valiant efforts of former Screaming Eagles. This link with the past did much to build esprit and enhance the fighting spirit of the present generation of Screaming Eagles.

As Commanding General, I experienced unlimited pride in my troopers every action and the tremendous spirit which they displayed. I encouraged visitors to the division to share this pride as well as to seek new ideas. Each visitor, regardless of rank or position received my personal attention and if time permitted, visits to areas to allow maximum exposure to troopers. Each was presented with a remembrance of his visit to the 101st Airborne Division in the form of a plaque and Screaming Eagle Coins. I considered these visits most important from the aspect of giving good an impression of the 101st Airborne Division and the Army as a whole.

On 1 May 1969, I had the pleasure of officially opening a local R&P Center for the line companies of the division. Eagle Beach, located on the South China Sea, was planned and completely built through the efforts of the 101st Airborne Division. It came about as the development of an idea to provide a first-class resort area for field-weary troopers. Billets, a mess hall and an NCO/IM club have been built; equipment for boating, fishing, water skiing have been provided in order to make the troopers stay as pleasant as possible. Eagle Beach has its own PX and concessionaires providing tailor and gift shop services. The division super contact team composed of representatives of the various support agencies visits the standdown company providing the men with clean clothes, new boots, weapons and radio repair service, watches and other high value items from the PX and replacement of identification tags and identification cards. In addition, representatives from the Staff Judge Advocate and the Finance Office are available to assist in any legal or financial matters. This super contact team also visited units when they returned to firebases providing them the services just outlined. The division band provided musical entertainment in addition to any floorshows contracted by the NCO club. A staff of 25 personnel were hand-picked in order to take the best possible care of the troopers treating them with courtesy and dignity. Eagle Beach has been a most welcome addition to the morale and welfare program of the 101st.

As I just mentioned the division band provided musical entertainment for the standdown companies at Eagle Beach. This was only one of many ways in which they contributed to the morale and esprit of the division. This talented organization was capable of providing music for all official functions and ceremonies, and providing entertainment to the troopers as a marching band, stage band, concert band and a combo. The reputation of the Screaming Eagle band was such that many non-divisional units requested its services. It is truly an air-mobile band in that they have played for units from the DMZ to Da Nang. Their visits were not limited to rear areas, for they went to the most remote firebases to entertain the troops. A little more on the super contact team I discussed in conjunction with Eagle Beach. I found this team to be an excellent way to refit and take care of the personal needs of the troopers after extensive field operations. This team met the field weary troopers with hot chow, cold drinks, ice cream, mail, clean clothes and shower facilities. The PX was there with the items that the troopers desired, i.e., watches, cameras and stereo equipment. In this regard, I insured that my field troopers always had access to those items since their opportunities to visit the larger exchanges which stocked these items were limited. Direct support repair teams were available to make on-the-spot repair of weapons and radios and representatives from the AG, Finance and SJA took care of the troopers' needs. This also

was an airmobile team in that they went to numerous locations within the division area of operations to accomplish their mission.

Other recent additions in the morale and welfare field have been trailer mounted photo labs and libraries. Soldiers are now able to improve their education through the use of the services of education centers located at the division and brigade base camps.

Another morale builder was the four American Red Cross girls attached to the Division. These well-qualified and attractive young ladies visited the troops at firebases in the combat areas conducting various participation type word games and quizzes.

Worthy of mention is the division reenlistment program, which places major emphasis on retaining the first term enlistee. Commanders at each level were directed to emphasize their reenlistment effort to the same degree as their operations, training and maintenance areas. The career noncommissioned officers were encouraged to utilize a positive, energetic approach to the career development of their men. This program has paid tremendous dividends, attested to by the fact that in April 1969 the 101st was first in USARV for reenlistments. I was, of course, concerned with the other aspects of the personnel field, i.e., mail, personal actions, safety, religion and finance. The Division Finance Office is located in the Division Rear at Bien Hoa. To insure good financial support additional forward finance offices were established at each brigade base camp. These teams were able to provide complete financial service ranging from answering pay inquiries to processing allotments. Additional personnel were sent to these forward offices during the payday period to process payrolls, make partial payments and selling Treasury Checks for IFPC.

Co-located with Finance at the rear was the Division Adjutant General. A forward office staffed with representatives from the key sections of the AG was established at the Division Base Camp, Camp Eagle. Representatives of the AG visited the divisional units on a recurring basis providing high calibre service. Because of the organization described above and a "can do" attitude no efficiency was lost due to this separation.

Outstanding results were achieved through hard work and by putting the "personal" in personnel by treating each trooper as an individual and by insuring that everything possible was done for the soldiers bearing the brunt of the fighting.

In summary I would say that the most significant factor contributing to the success I enjoyed as a Division Commander was due to my ability, through the means which I have described, to convey to my commanders and troopers the deep and sincere concern which I held for each one.

CONFIDENTIAL

LOGISTICS

1. (U) General: This inclosure outlines Logistical Concepts of Operation and Combat Service Support used by the 101st Airborne Division.

2. (C) Logistical Concepts of Operations:

a. The bulk of supplies are shipped from Da Nang to Hue by sea transport and are transloaded to trucks for movement into the division area. When possible the supplies are taken directly to the brigade areas for unit distribution.

b. Unit distribution of all classes of supply is made by the Division Support Command as far forward as possible from consolidated hook out pads located in each brigade area of operation.

c. This technique of supply distribution permits maximum utilization of organic CH-47 helicopters and decreases aircraft safety hazards by providing centralized control and increased responsiveness and flexibility. This system is responsive to the division's needs and is built around the Forward Service Support Elements (FSSE) supporting each of the brigades.

d. The FSSE is organized with a control headquarters, a movement control team, an airfield control team, a medical company, a forward supply platoon, and a forward maintenance company. Except for the control headquarters and the movement and airfield control teams, the units of the FSSE are organic to the division's supply and services, medical and maintenance battalions. When organized as outlined above, the FSSE contains all the elements necessary to support the maneuver battalions of the division.

e. The FSSE breaks out the supplies for shipment to the forward units utilizing the brigade hookout pad which has been designed to accommodate CH-47 operations. The loading area is divided into lanes which are assigned to the supported elements who are responsible for preparing the supplies for internal or external transport by CH-47. Due to the rapid loading and unloading, external movement is utilized to the maximum extent possible.

f. Supplies are rigged for air movement by the unit concerned with equipment drawn from the FSSE. All rigged loads are inspected by qualified riggers prior to movement.

g. During CH-47 helicopter loading operations, movement control personnel from the FSSE, assisted by liaison personnel from the Assault Helicopter Support Battalion maintain position control of all aircraft in the loading area. As the CH-47 helicopter approaches the loading area, movement control personnel direct the aircraft to the designated lane for load pick up. The aircraft hovers into position and personnel on the ground complete the final hookup of the load to the aircraft. The movement control personnel inform the pilot of load destination, unit call sign, and radio frequency by UHF radio. An FM net is also established so that any unit can call directly to the FSSE movement control and request aircraft to transport supplies.

CONFIDENTIAL

h. Maximum use of the aviation assets allocated for combat service support is obtained through the use of preplanned air resupply missions which are submitted by the units to the FSSE movement control section for consolidation and coordination with the supporting helicopter unit. Most of these preplanned requests are for movement of Class I, IV, V and water. Unscheduled (add-on) resupply missions are coordinated by the Support Command Transportation officer who integrates these missions into the schedule IAW established priorities based on the urgency of the situation and the availability of aircraft. Add-on missions are most frequently used to move artillery ammunition to forward fire bases. When emergency resupply of forward combat units by helicopters is required, movement control personnel immediately direct aircraft to the brigade hookout area. If no aircraft are inbound to the hookout area liaison personnel from the assault helicopter battalion contact their operations center and obtain the required aircraft. The FSSE control officer in the brigade area insures that the required supplies are made available and rigged for shipment to the forward unit. The ability to rapidly respond to a combat emergency has been greatly facilitated by the centralized control of logistical aircraft and the stockage of fast moving supplies in the FSSE at each brigade base.

i. The above concept of resupply has provided consistent responsive combat support to the combat elements.

3. (C) Combat Service Support (Super Contact Team)

a. The 101st Airborne Division organized the Super Contact Team to provide maximum assistance to division units during Service Support Operations in field locations.

b. Super Contact Team Support includes supply, maintenance, and personnel services required to refurbish each individual, his weapon, and his combat equipment. This support is available to all division units on request whenever troops are returned from combat operations. This concept of support requires each Forward Support Element (FSSE) to organize a combat support task force tailored to perform the specific services requested by the supported unit.

c. The FSSE's operating in support of each brigade are augmented with personnel from AG, IG, Chemical, Finance, and the Post Exchange.

d. The contact teams operate under the control of the Division Support Command and respond rapidly, moving by vehicle or Chinook helicopter to forward unit areas to render combat service support. It has been found that this rapid and complete response is the key to successful support operations.

e. Normally infantry battalions rotate a company or platoon into a forward fire base for service support every two (2) to four (4) weeks as the tactical situation permits. In some cases the battalion is returned to its base camp for service support.

CONFIDENTIAL

f. Service support operations usually last from 12 to 14 hours after which the combat units are again committed for tactical operations. As combat units arrive in the support area, the Super Contact Team is ready on site to support and remains on site until service support is rendered.

g. The requirement to move the Super Contact Teams and their equipment by air (helicopters) has forced the innovation of certain techniques and equipment modifications. An example of this is the Division Maintenance Battalion's mobile shop sets which are primarily moved on 1/2 ton mules, and transported with repair parts stored in marked bins by Chinook (CH-47) helicopters. Also available is a basic load of clothing and other supplies maintained in CONEX's ready to be hooked out to fire bases. The combat service support provided by the Super Contact Team is "push" oriented and is designed to accommodate the needs of each individual soldier. This concept of support identifies specific problems in supply, maintenance and administrative areas where additional emphasis is required.

h. Every individual weapon is inspected and repaired on the spot by a qualified small arms repairman, or, if repair is not possible in the field, the weapon is immediately replaced by a float item. Additional weapons, if required are obtained from the division base. Weapons are also inspected to insure that all modifications have been performed. AG representatives provide replacement dog tags, and take ID card pictures using a polaroid camera. The individual soldier can also purchase postal money orders from this team. If any soldier has a legal or financial problem, or any other personal complaint, assistance from JAG, Finance, and Inspector General representatives are available. Medical and dental services include a complete dental and medical check by unit dental and medical officers. Shot records are inspected and the necessary shots administered. If further treatment is required, the Super Contact Team arranges transportation to evacuate soldiers to dental and medical facilities in the rear. A forward PX outlet is set up, stocked with food items, cigarettes, magazines, and PX rationed items such as electronic items at the support site. If access to the support site is available by road, a mobile PX van is used. If not, CONEX's loaded with PX supplies are hooked out by CH-47 helicopters to the support site. To insure that all units receive an equitable share of available rationed items, they are reserved for the unit pending return from combat operations. In addition, barbers are provided at the marshalling site for haircuts. Again, if roads are available, a mobile barber shop van is transported to the support site.

i. The Super Contact Team is available to all divisional units on a packet basis. The team provides partial or selected services to units on request when circumstances do not permit the full range of service. Artillery and other direct support units are supported concurrently with the infantry units with which they are co-located. The Super Contact Team has proven to be an effective means of maintaining the combat readiness of the division in the minimum period of time while sustaining a high level of troop morale. This program allows an accelerated process of providing combat service support to a large number of combat troops and at the same time provides direct, personal support to the individual soldier.

CONFIDENTIAL

CIVIC ACTION

1. (C) General: During this period, significant transformation took place in the Division civic action effort not only qualitatively and quantitatively, but also from the standpoint of civic action objectives, relationship of the civic action effort to the combat operations, and the integration of the entire effort throughout the Province into a cohesive program. Last July, enemy forces retained sufficient strength in the populated coastal plains to restrict civic action efforts to the vicinity of Hue and other areas where the presence of military forces provided the requisite degree of security. The civic action effort was focused on high impact, short range undertakings designed to provide emergency assistance to institutions and groups who had suffered recent crippling damage in the war. As combat operations established security throughout the coastal plains, the Division's civic action effort spread throughout the populated areas of the Province. At the present time, the Division is in the unique situation where it is conducting the combat operations already described in the sparsely settled mountains and valleys extending west to Laos and south to Quang Nam while at the same time it is conducting a vigorous civic action effort throughout the coastal plains. This civic action effort, conducted in an area now secured primarily by local Vietnamese forces, is exploiting the success of earlier combat operations. At the same time the objectives have changed from short-range emergency assistance to war victims to support of a long-range program to achieve specific goals in the overall Province reconstruction, resettlement, and development effort. At the same time the objectives were changing, the Division was playing a major role in welding the civic action program of many diverse elements into a coordinated, cohesive effort. Throughout this period the Division continued to conduct civic action tasks as an integral part of all tactical operations in populated areas.

2. (C) Conduct of Civic Action Effort:

a. Coordination of responsibilities: The 101st Airborne Division had the responsibility to regulate the civic action conducted by all military units within Thua Thien Province. These included: Sea Bees, Marines, elements of the Navy and many other non-Divisional Army units. Discharging this responsibility and carrying out its own civic action program necessitated close cooperation with CORDS and the various Vietnamese agencies also engaged in redevelopment. The Division was therefore the focal point for the entire civic action effort within the Province. As the coordination function is extremely important in any civic action activity, the ability to develop a cohesive effort made civic action an effective program within Thua Thien Province. The Division maintained close, continuous liaison and received detailed weekly and monthly reports from all participating units. In addition, weekly/monthly CA coordination meetings were held with both Divisional and non-Divisional units represented. At these meetings it was possible to determine: what each element was doing, what each was interested in doing; what assets the units could provide to each other and what particular problems or successes needed additional emphasis.

CONFIDENTIAL

b. Development of civic action program: Through experience and constant reevaluation the Division civic action program has developed from a haphazard, loosely coordinated effort into a program closely integrated with the objectives established by the Province Chief's pacification plan. This was a civic action effort which had definite goals, supply systems, allocation of resources and objectives to be accomplished, much the same as is laid out for combat operations. The framework for the civic action effort of the Division was really the Province Chief's Pacification Plan. In November 1968 the Province Chief developed his three month accelerated pacification campaign. The civic action effort was closely integrated with the pacification effort, to include combat operations. When the Pacification Plan of 1969 was developed and implemented, the civic action support provided by the Division was even more closely involved with the execution of the plan. In determining what specific projects it would support in order to provide optimum assistance, Division civic action personnel visited with village and district chiefs to inquire what they wanted done in their areas to meet the goals which had been established for them by the Province Chief. These personnel then attempted to ascertain if the officials had requested assistance through Vietnamese channels. They checked to find out what assistance the agencies would provide; what assistance would be provided by CORUS and what assistance could be provided by other military units. The Division then tailored its support to fill the gaps in the assistance not provided by other agencies. Thus, Division efforts did not compete or duplicate but rather supplemented and complemented what the other organizations were doing. Division Civic Action personnel also coordinated with the local or district chief for the provision of labor to accomplish the desired projects. The Division itself provided a negligible amount of labor to the projects, as most of the labor was provided by the Vietnamese who would benefit by the completed project. The role of the Division, therefore, was primarily that of management, organization and transportation. The Division also assisted in materiel procurement by expediting the administration of requests for assistance, supervising the flow of materials to insure timely delivery, and encouraging Vietnamese officials to increase their individual efforts to assist their people and constantly assuring them Division support and interest in the expansion of this effort. Again, the key point in the development of the program ties in closely with what was said earlier concerning coordination of responsibilities. Essentially the Division's effort was a planned, long range part of a Province wide plan which involved numerous Vietnamese and civilian agencies. A cohesive effort was developed and the plan was implemented in an organized, closely coordinated fashion.

c. Effectiveness of the Civic Action Effort: The Division's civic action activities during the period were extremely effective and made a significant contribution toward the success of the overall pacification effort in Thua Thien Province. The CA program was a key factor in the attainment of pacification goals and continues to receive appropriate consideration by Province officials in the development of their plans and objectives. The coordination by the Division of many civic action functions taking place in Thua Thien Province, successfully harnessed the capabilities of many diversified agencies into a smooth, well integrated effort. Another key role played by the Division in the reconstruction and resettlement effort was to provide the spark and drive to initiate worthwhile projects and see them through to a successful conclusion. The Division effectively served as a catalyst; stimulating new efforts in expedited administration,

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

providing materials not otherwise available, and following through to assist in overcoming any obstacles to continued progress. The techniques utilized by the Division to integrate civic action activities into tactical situations, especially cordon operations proved to be very effective. While it is difficult to measure the success achieved in influencing the attitudes of the people during the operations, the genuine friendliness of those affected indicated that they were appreciative of the concern and interest shown in their welfare. The valuable intelligence voluntarily provided by the villagers may be attributed in part to the good will generated by civic action efforts. Overall, the civic action effort has served to strengthen the bond of friendship and cooperation that has grown between the Division and the local people. The variety of civic action activities the Division has engaged in throughout the province, positive response to requests for assistance; and constant effort to expand and improve its assistance has made the Division a dynamic and welcome member of the community. Officials at all levels cooperate whole heartedly with the Division and seek its assistance. It is recognized by all that the 101st is not only interested in establishing security throughout Thua Thien Province but also in doing everything that it can possibly do to assist in the welfare of all of the people.

3. (C) Integration with Tactical Operations: Just as the civic action effort was an integral part of the long range scheme for accomplishing pacification objectives in the Province, so was civic action integrated into the daily tactical operations of the Division's whenever these were in populated areas. This was especially true in the conduct of all cordon operations. A considerable effort was taken to ensure that the Vietnamese were not antagonized by the inconvenience caused them by the cordon, thus negating the effect of the entire operation. In this type of operation even though a cordon is basically a complex search operation designed to identify and route out VC and VCI, the long range objectives of the pacification effort dictated that equal attention be given to minimizing the alienation of the population. As the ultimate goal of the military was to win the support of the people, a vigorous civic action and psychological operation effort was habitually a vital part of the operations. Because a consequence of tactical operations is discomfort and inconvenience to the local inhabitants, the Division provided blankets, food, water and cooking facilities when they were required. Division medical personnel frequently took advantage of the large gatherings to render medical assistance. The Division also provided loudspeaker and communication facilities so that Government officials could explain why the operation and the inconvenience were necessary. All of the agencies available within the Vietnamese structure: radio, cultural drama teams, Vietnamese information service, armed propaganda teams, were utilized whenever tactical conditions permitted. In addition, the Division band played attached audio visual teams showed movies when the operations lasted into the evening. As stressed earlier, this type of operation demanded a close cooperative venture between US and Vietnamese agencies, the Vietnamese military units or other official agencies that were utilized for interrogation and search of the people and their property. This was continued even when Division combat elements were concentrated in the mountains, the Vietnamese began to conduct independent cordon operations on the plains with Division civic action/psyop supporting these unilateral Vietnamese operations.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

4. (C) Community Relations:

a. The importance of maintaining good US/Vietnamese relations was a matter of recurring command attention. The troops were periodically reminded of the importance of being good ambassadors and practicing common courtesy. A one-half hour class on US/Vietnamese relations was incorporated into the POI at the Screaming Eagle Replacement Training School for instruction to all men newly assigned to the Division. In addition Division elements conducted various exchanges and joint activities with the civilian and military authorities throughout the province. For example, at Division level, helicopter visits to forward fire bases and overflies of remote operational areas were provided for Vietnamese civic leaders and influential citizens of Hue. They also visited Camp Eagle to view captured trucks, medical supplies and signal equipment which was presented to the Province Chief for functional use and propaganda exploitation. Province, District and Hue City officials attended several social functions at the Commanding General's Mess. Within their assigned areas, brigades and battalions also participated in many joint functions designed to further good US/Vietnamese relations.

b. During the Tet period all elements of the Division made a concentrated effort to share in the celebration with the Vietnamese. Many children's parties were sponsored, the Division band gave daily performances, helicopters transported Vietnamese civilians to hospitals, the Division chaplain's fund donated \$1,000.00 (US) to the widows of the 1st ARVN Division soldiers killed during the 1968 Tet Offensive, and 50,000 \$VN in shiny new coins were distributed to children throughout the area.

5. (C) Assessment of the Current Situation:

a. Local Government: In those areas of government which the Division had the opportunity to observe, the provincial and district governments appeared to be effective and responsive. The Province Chief appointed eight of ten District Chiefs during the period of this report in an effort to improve the quality of leadership at that level. Material for the reconstruction and development effort seemed to be effectively distributed and used on the projects for which intended. During the month of March local officials were elected in 26 villages and 128 hamlets (Thua Thien now has elected officials in 67 of 85 villages and 302 of 472 hamlets). About 88% of the eligible voters participated in the elections and the VC were unable to delay or disrupt any elections. The officials are now active in determining what projects need to be undertaken in managing the effort.

b. Resettlement progress: During the period of this report there were no significant number of new refugees and none were created since August. Indicative of the momentum of the refugee resettlement are 71,000 refugees who have returned to their former homes since 1 November 1969. The local government has effectively met its commitments to assist in the reestablishment of the people.

CONFIDENTIAL

c. Attitude of the people: There has been a very evident resurgence of confidence in the GVN by the people. This is demonstrated by the manner in which they are returning to rural areas, clearing the rubble of war and rebuilding their homes. In many cases bunkers have been torn down and the material and space put to other use. Old fields are once again under cultivation with some new land and crops planted. The activity, enthusiasm, and energy of the people reflect their optimism for the future. Division personnel now move freely on civic action work in areas that were formerly strongly contested or VC controlled. The Division effort has been a key factor toward the reconstruction and development effort - the local population recognizes that the 101st Airborne Division is interested not only in providing security and the destruction of foreign and internal aggressors but also dedicated to the welfare of the common man.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

Unclassified
Security Classification

DOCUMENT CONTROL DATA - R & D		
(Security classification of title, body of abstract and indexing annotation must be entered when the overall report is classified)		
1. ORIGINATING ACTIVITY (Corporate author)		2a. REPORT SECURITY CLASSIFICATION
HQ, OACSFOR, DA, Washington, D. C. 20310		Confidential
		2b. GROUP
		4
3. REPORT TITLE		
Senior Officer Debriefing Report: MG Melvin Zais		
4. DESCRIPTIVE NOTES (Type of report and inclusive dates)		
Senior Officer Debriefing Report, Period 19 July 1968 to 25 May 1969.		
5. AUTHOR(S) (First name, middle initial, last name)		
Major General Melvin Zais		
6. REPORT DATE	7a. TOTAL NO. OF PAGES	7b. NO. OF REFS
25 May 1969	38	
8a. CONTRACT OR GRANT NO.	9a. ORIGINATOR'S REPORT NUMBER(S)	
b. PROJECT NO.	69B018	
c. N/A	9b. OTHER REPORT NO(S) (Any other numbers that may be assigned this report)	
d.		
10. DISTRIBUTION STATEMENT		
11. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES		12. SPONSORING MILITARY ACTIVITY
N/A		OACSFOR, DA, Washington, D.C. 20310
13. ABSTRACT		

35

CONFIDENTIAL

DD FORM 1 NOV 65 1473

Unclassified
Security Classification